

Please amend the application as follows:

In the Claims

Please cancel Claims 53-62 without prejudice.

Please amend Claims 41 and 45 as follows:

41. (Thrice Amended) A method of identifying an agent which enhances the activity of an [isolated] caspase or procaspase expressed in immature thymocytes, or an active derivative or fragment thereof, wherein said caspase is necessary for apoptosis, comprising the steps of:
- (a) contacting [the] an isolated caspase or procaspase, or an active derivative or fragment thereof, with a caspase substrate in the presence of the agent; and
- (b) identifying enhancement of caspase or procaspase activity.
45. (Thrice Amended) A method of enhancing the activity of an [isolated] caspase or procaspase expressed in immature thymocytes, or an active derivative or fragment thereof, wherein said caspase is necessary for apoptosis, comprising contacting [said] an isolated caspase or procaspase with an agent that enhances the activity of the caspase or procaspase.

Please add the following new claims:

- 64. The method of Claim 41, wherein the enhanced procaspase or caspase activity results from prolonging the duration of the activity.
65. The method of Claim 41, wherein the enhanced procaspase or caspase activity results from increasing the amount of procaspase or caspase.